A study of a trip with abnormal transport

Almost the same goods
Almost the same vehicles
Almost the same roads
Almost the same signs
Almost the same rules of general traffic
Very different rules for abnormal transport
Introduction:

Abnormal transports are performed throughout Europe with highly skilled labour. The drivers handle trucks with great professionalism. Together with the loading team, the goods are loaded and secured for transport.

The type of abnormal transport is largely the same and the roads they follow are largely the same, but conducted under different rules.

Abnormal transport becomes larger and the number of journeys rises.

In the construction industry, the machines they use for road and house building become bigger, in other cases, the equipment or machines have to be assembled by highly trained personnel to ensure the quality, and it is more efficient to move the finished product than to assemble it on site. In some cases, manufacturers have shifted production to countries with cheaper production costs. This is just some of the explanations for this.

The trucks, the equipment and the special trailer, which the haulier is using, are getting better and better, as it is now possible to move almost anything.

This study does not include customs clearance.

Recommendations:

The European best practice guidelines have been prepared by an Expert Group created by the Directorate General for Energy and Transport and comprising experts designated by the Member States in 2006. The document was presented to the Road Safety High Level Group, which gave a positive opinion concerning its content and scope.

Link to the guidelines:

This group of experts has produced an excellent guide which is now six years old, and some of the principles in the guide have been implemented in several countries.

The authorities in many countries are not aware of Best Practice Guidelines.

In the six years that have passed, both technology and vehicles have developed strongly at the same time as the transports have increased.

The guide is not fully implemented in all EU countries, and it is difficult to say whether this is caused by lack of knowledge or whether there are other reasons for this, but the time has now come for an evaluation of the guide.

If we accept that abnormal transports are necessary, all countries benefit from using the guide. The report, which is based on the rules of best practice guidelines, will for the current study, be highlighted at the points where the rules would work and where they need improvement.
The group of Best Practice under NVF (Nordic Road Association) Fordon och Transporter (Trucks and transports) will work towards getting each of the Scandinavian countries to accept the “European best practice guidelines”, so that the transport may be conducted in the Scandinavian countries, if the carrier has a transport that meets the conditions laid down in the guidelines.

The European best practice guidelines will not replace the national rules.

Link to the group from NVF http://www.nvfnorden.org/pages/86.

**Comparison of rules in Scandinavia**

The group of experts from NVF gathers information on the differences which exist today, and has prepared an overview to illustrate the differences.

The sheet on page four shows the rules for length, width, height and total weight for escort cars.

This sheet is valid for the Scandinavian countries and the European Best Practice Guidelines.

The sheet does not cover all rules. Several countries supply permits together with the main rules of laws and regulations and a route description. *See annex no.1.*

The quality and the complexity of the resulting papers is very different.

Today, Sweden is actually able to deliver a file to the driver to download the entire trip on the GPS system in the vehicle, and thereby guide the driver through the journey.

Some authorities have been contacted for fictional permits for the entire trip, but it was not possible to get a permit from the authorities in Holland and Germany, so the information from Germany and the Netherlands are based on similar permits and information from hauliers who have carried out similar tours in these countries.
## Comparison of Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Abnormal Transport</th>
<th>SV</th>
<th>FI</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>IS</th>
<th>BPG-AT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Length in normal traffic</td>
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<td>17,5/19,5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18,75/16,5</td>
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<td>&lt;30/27</td>
<td>&lt;30</td>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>&gt;32,5/30-50</td>
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<td>&gt;30</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Width in normal traffic</td>
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<td>&lt;=2,6/2,55</td>
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<td>&gt;3,5</td>
<td>&gt;3,65/4,0</td>
<td>&gt;3</td>
<td>&gt;3</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>50</td>
<td>44/49</td>
<td>40/44</td>
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<td>&gt;55</td>
<td>&gt;50</td>
<td>&gt;44</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
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<td>some bridge conditions</td>
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<td>some bridge conditions</td>
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<tr>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>no</td>
<td>bridges</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>Size</td>
<td>&lt;=4,5 ton</td>
<td>&lt;=4 ton</td>
<td>&lt;=3,5 ton</td>
<td>&lt;=3,5 ton</td>
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<td>no</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escort vehicles by road authorities</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Before the journey

The transport buyer contacts a haulage contractor with a transport task, and an operator decides whether the transport can be performed.

Hauliers with many years of experience know about the possibility of carrying out the journey. Often the haulier gives advice and takes care of how the customer can get his goods from A to B, and often other transport forms are included.

For this journey, the haulier must contact the authorities in six different countries to seek permission to run the abnormal transport in their country. In Sweden and Denmark, the haulier has to contact the bridge authorities.

The haulier must also contact the customs authorities in each country. This type of transport is so expensive that it is not a possibility that the transport will be rejected by the customs authorities with the result that the haulier is going to seek a new permit.

Then the haulier examines the rules concerning the marking and lightning of his vehicle in the various countries.

In this case, the vehicle should be equipped with six different signalling systems, which are very similar in the various countries, but never the less a bit different. See annex no. 2

The main purpose is to mark and warn other road users.

Here, the experts at Best Guidelines proposed some pictograms. The idea is good, but it is my opinion that only specialists understand these pictograms.

EU should be able to use one type of signs, and simply the warning signs

The size and form is included in Directive 76/757/EØF.

There is actually no big difference in the warning lights. All countries use warning lights according to UN ECE R 65, and the basic idea that they should be placed on either the vehicle or the goods to warn and to show maximum size, is also the very same in all countries. There may be small differences between the maximum altitude location and numbers, but it seems that all countries are able to fulfill the objective of alerting other road users.

Before the haulier can get his permission, all countries require information on vehicle dimension, weights and axel loads.
The form used by hauliers to inform the authorities about the weight and dimension of the vehicle looks very similar in many European countries. See Appendix no 3.

The Best Guidelines experts also propose a standardised form from SERT (Special European Registration of Truck and Trailers). See annex 5 in Best Practice Guidelines

Proposals: If we combine the standard form with the hauliers’ reports on their vehicles into a European database, each country could then extract information on the current transport and the companies data would be well-known, and everyone would benefit from this.

In case of an international transport, the Scandinavian countries only have to contact one office like in Holland and Germany. This means that one of the recommendations in the best guidelines has already been implemented in these countries: the ONE-STOP-SHOP.

Should we take this further? One could imagine one office with all information on the current transport through the European database.

Before the haulier can sign the final contract for the trip, he must take into account the time which it will take in the various countries to grant the permit. The time window ranges from 1 day to 25 days, sometimes up to 60 days. The main reason for delay is the number of local or regional authorities which have to be contacted. Information from Best Guidelines

Below please find the average waiting time to get permission according to the best practice guidelines, payment and escort cars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average Waiting Time</th>
<th>Payment for Permit</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>90 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2.5 days</td>
<td>yes, approx.</td>
<td>153 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>yes, approx.</td>
<td>124 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>yes, approx.</td>
<td>97 EUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the haulier has to contact the escort companies. On this particular journey he must use escort vehicles all the way, since the load of the transportation is above 4 m.

The haulier has to make a detailed plan in accordance with the regulation rules on driving times, breaks and rest periods for drivers.

Prior to the journey, the haulier should investigate whether there are special rules for the time of the day when the transport is carried out. For example "rush hour and night driving".

Now it is time for the actual transport.
The actual transport:

An abnormal transport journey from Finland through Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Germany to Holland. This transport is based on a fictitious transport of a demo machine; the machine must be presented at six different locations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts about the vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_axel load</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facts about the vehicle
Challenges during the journey:

**In Finland:**
You will not find any major problems, first step meet with your escort company.
The next step comes when the signs have to be changed at Harparanda.

**In Sweden**
Meet with your new escort company for the first part of the journey in Sweden.

**In Norway:**
Meet with your new escort company.

Three tunnels must be closed for oncoming traffic, and the haulier must have a contract with the authorities stating when these tunnels can be passed and have the police help the driver stop all oncoming traffic.

**In Sweden:**
Remember to change signs and to arrange a meeting with your new escort company.

There are 41 bridges to be crossed with various restrictions. On 32 bridges, the driver has in his own lane a speed limit from 10km to 50 km / h. Nine of the bridges must be crossed in the middle of the row without any oncoming traffic, so the oncoming traffic must be blocked.

You must notify the Oresund Bridge's Traffic Centre of your arrival at least two hours beforehand. The telephone number is +45 33 41 65 91. At the toll station, you must produce your authorization and inform of the size of your transport and the time window.

**Rush hour:**
Special transport can take place during restricted time windows in order to minimize the inconvenience to other traffic on the Oresund Bridge.

**Time Window II**
Monday – Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sundays, Holidays and the day before a Holiday
00:00 - 06:00 00:00 - 06:00 00:00 - 10:00 00:00 - 12:00
09:00 - 15:00 09:00 - 13:00 18:00 - 24:00 20:00 - 24:00
18:00 - 24:00

The border at the Oresund bridge between Sweden and Denmark is located in the middle of the bridge, so the driver will have to change the signs on the vehicle to Danish signs. It is not allowed to stop on the bridge and there is no room to park large trucks on the Danish side near the bridge, therefore, it has been agreed that the signs can be changed on the Swedish side.

At Oresund bridge, you need an escort to cross. The easiest way is to buy the escort service of the Oresund bridge and meet with the Danish company on the Danish side of the bridge.
In Denmark:

The first next step in Denmark is crossing the Great Belt Bridge
Contact the O-Room at least 2 hours prior to arrival.
O-Room: Tel: + 45 58 30 30 51 - Fax: + 45 58 30 30 99
(Manned 24 hours)

In Germany:

In Germany, the escort cars depend on an actual assessment of the size, the time when the journey must take place and whether there are road works or any special traffic situations.

Since this is a fictional transport, I could not get exact knowledge whether Germany would require an escort car. However, due to the transport width of 4.05 m, I assume that Germany will require an escort car.

So arrange a meeting with your new escort company, and remember to change the signs on the vehicle.

In Holland

Arrange a meeting with your new escort company, and remember to change the signs on the vehicle.

End:

The conclusion at the end of this journey will certainly be that all companies wishing to carry out such operations must have administrative staff with skills, ranging from language skills, planning, contract negotiation and extensive knowledge of the rules in each country.

The company must also have highly skilled drivers who are not only adept at handling the vehicle, but who can also keep track of all documents and regulations in different countries, while the driver must be able to work with many different types of staff from the many escort companies.

Conclusion, goals and vision for the future:

Abnormal transport requirements in Europe are to ease the administrative burden for authorities, police, local road authorities, hauliers and drivers.

We have to create a more transparent system to ensure knowledge and efficient operation control. With this, abnormal transports can be carried out with everyone assured of the best security for these journeys and with a uniform administration throughout Europe.

Today, the burden of administration when obtaining the permit for abnormal transport is very heavy and involves high costs for all parties involved.

The question is whether this is necessary.
If we return to the first page:

Almost the same goods
Almost the same vehicles
Almost the same roads
Almost the same signs
Almost the same rules of general traffic
Very different rules for abnormal transport

European travel anywhere in Europe by car, most people travel smoothly and comply with traffic regulations in the countries.

Most differences concerning traffic rules are for the most part about:

Alcohol limit, toll, limited traffic areas (weight / size, environmental zones), lights on during the day, winter tyres, reflective jacket in car, speed limit.

Many countries in Europe have displays at the border which clearly show some of the rules.

The above rules are for the most part for professional drivers and companies known rules, and none of the rules presents special obstacles to run the abnormal transport.

Abnormal journeys often encounter challenges when the transport takes place from the loading site to the main roads and away from the main roads to the unloading site.

With these few challenges in mind, I would argue that the company which performs abnormal transport would have maximum three authorities to contact, if we had an effective system in Europe.

The actual travel shows very clearly the five major problem areas for the company and driver.

1: The number of authorities to contact to obtain permit
2: The differences in waiting time to obtain permit
3: The numbers of different papers
4: The number of escort companies to make agreements with.
5: The number of signs that the vehicle should be equipped with.

To start with the easy part, it should not be so hard to follow ideas from the best guidelines and allow one type of signs on vehicles that carry out abnormal transports internationally.

The basic idea of using a sign with the text “abnormal transport”, where you do not specify the actual transport, is to keep it simple. This is recommended by many studies of the behaviour of road users and their ability to recognise an abnormal traffic situation.

Marking lights indicate the size of the carriage, and if it is slow, it is better to use known signs, and there will still be marking lights to warn other drivers.
The other three problems cannot be solved individually, this is perhaps the greatest barrier to progress.

We need a system of roads (corridors), which are also listed in the Best Guidelines.

Europe must create corridors for abnormal transports. These corridors could be classified so that the authorities knew how big and heavy transports that could be implemented. **The time slot for a permit would be reduced.**

The authority issuing the permit would not need to ask the regional or local road authorities. It would only be necessary where the transportation is carried out from the main road to the unloading site. On local roads, there may be other considerations. Maybe this could be one of the demands to the transport recipient of an abnormal transport.

“If a company would receive an abnormal transport they have to get permit from their location to the nearest possible corridor.”

**In Denmark**, we have a system where all abnormal transports are classified. Furthermore, there is a general road network containing classified corridors.

By using these two systems together, the police may give the permit directly to the transportation company without having to ask the road authorities. Under normal circumstances, a permit could be sent to the haulier within one or two hours for known hauliers and known transports.

The system in Denmark is missing the data part which leads me to challenge number 3.

As can be seen from the Annex, the papers that the haulier must provide to the various countries, are not so different from each other.

The best practice guidelines mention that you could use the SERT system and produce identical forms for registration of vehicles and trailers. The same could be done for the application of abnormal transport.

If the visions for the future were to be fulfilled, there should be a database on an Internet-based system within the EU where hauliers could enter their entire vehicle and trailer information on standard papers together with their application for permit.

The same system would include corridors from all countries, and the road authorities could continuously update when new corridors were added to the existing road network.

Then the next step would be one office which coordinates the whole scenario. Below is an example of how it could work out, if we assume that the haulier takes care of all transport issues.

A transport buyer contacts a haulier to order an international, abnormal transport. The haulier contacts the EU office and logs on to his own page where he fills in the application paper and chooses his vehicle and trailer combination.

The office submits information on the location of the closest corridor for the ordered transport to local road authorities, both with regard to where the journey starts and where the transport ends. All
the other part of the journey is a corridor and if the system is well designed, the office could see the route as well as if there is any trouble along the route.

So this brings us to the last challenge for escort car and drivers. As it is today, the rules are very different. In Sweden for instance there are two types of escort cars and two types of escort drivers and an education for one type of escort drivers.

Denmark has one type of escort car, some rules and requirements for escort drivers, but no education. Denmark also accepts the approved escort vehicles from other countries, if they meet certain minimum requirements.

**Summary:**

If we are going to work for this vision, there must be alternative suggestions on how to get started and maybe take it bit by bit.

The first step could be to go ahead with the signs on the vehicle. This would be a start.

Secondly, we could perhaps use the SERT standard form for motor vehicles and trailers and a new standard form for applications for permit.

Maybe while we are waiting for the big data system, the use of long-term permits for known hauliers would help a lot to minimize the administrative burden for all parts.

The authorities in different EU countries should make a commitment to identify corridors.

If the corridor vision is implemented, there is a short way to same rules and EU database.

Then there is the final challenge concerning escort cars and drivers. Maybe you could get the IRU academy to prepare an international training for escort drivers, and authorities could look at the inspiration of the Best Guidelines for uniform escort cars.

Hans Skat
Dansk Transport og Logistik
The permit is issued on basis of the 31 § of the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications' decision on abnormal transports and abnormal transport vehicles (1715/62).

APPEAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS ON CLAIMING RECTIFICATION

Appeal
This decision can be appealed to an Administrative Court through a written appeal. The appeal period is 30 days from the service of the decision. The calculation of the period begins on the day following the service of the decision.

Claim for rectification
Rectification of the determination of a charge can be sought from the Centre for Economic development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa through a written claim for rectification. The claim for rectification must be made within six months of the date of the invoice.

Content of the appeal and claim for rectification
The appeal document, which should be addressed to the Administrative Court, or the claim for rectification, which should be addressed to the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa, must state:
- the decision which is being appealed/the invoice for which rectification is being sought
- the amendments that are demanded
- the grounds on which the amendments are being demanded

Signature
The appellant or person drawing up the document must sign the appeal and claim for rectification. The name, home municipality, address and telephone number of the appellant and person drawing up the document must also be recorded in the documents.

Appendices
The following must be appended to the appeal document and claim for rectification:
- the decision subject to appeal or the original invoice or a copy
- the documents to which the appellant refers in support of the demands
- a letter of attorney if an attorney has been engaged

An account of the date on which the service of the decision has taken place must also be appended to the appeal document.

Delivery of the appeal and claim for rectification
The appeal document must be delivered to the Administrative Court within the appeal period, and the claim for rectification must be delivered to the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa within the period for the claim for rectification before the end of office hours. If the document is late, it will not be examined.

Costs
The decision of an Administrative Court is subject to a charge unless the Administrative Court alters a decision of the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa in favour of the appellant. A decision on rectification by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa is free of charge.

ADDRESSES

Appeal
Hämeenlinnan hallinto-olikeus
Reaalihuoneenkatu 1
FI-13100 HäMEENLINNA

Claim for rectification
The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa
PL 297
FI-33101 TAMPERE

PERMIT APPLICATIONS FOR ABNORMAL TRANSPORT

E-mail: erikoiskuljetuukset@ely-keskus.fi
Fax: +358-206 026 301
Address: The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa, abnormal transports
PO Box 297
FI-33101 TAMPERE
Telephone: +358-206 90302

Tel. +358(0)206 90300 Fax: +358(0)20 602 6301 erikoiskuljetuukset@ely-keskus.fi
### Appendix nr. 2

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**Breddmarkeringsskyltar**:

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- Breddmarkeringsskyltar bak:
  - B>4,0

**Varningslykta**

© Seppo Terävä

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**ABNORMAL TRANSPORT**

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</table>
German and Finnish schemes for vehicle Review
Reference:


The Road Authorities:

Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland.

The Police in Denmark: Abnormal transport office Padborg; Jørn Larsen

The group of experts from NVF group :

Arnaldsson Guðmundur, Arnarson Bjarni, Árnason Daniel, Hansen Richard A.  Island

Backlund Sakari, Ranta-aho Anne  Finland

Carstens Jørn-Henrik, Jansen Jan  Danmark

Damm Rune, Johnsen Asbjørn, Lillemork Tore  Norge

Holmstrand Thomas, Jormsjö Anita, Sverige

Reports:

Detection and Recognition of Alert Traffic Signs: by Chia-Hsiung Chen, Marcus Chen, and Tianshi Gao1

Stanford University

ROAD AND TRAFFIC SIGN DETECTION AND RECOGNITION: by Hasan FLEYEH, Mark DOUGHERTY
Department of Computer Engineering, Dalarna University, Sweden,